

CAST IRON ALLOY

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 The invention relates to a cast iron alloy for
cast iron products with a high thermal stability, the
alloy containing, as nonferrous constituents, at least
the elements C, Si, Mo, Al and, as admixtures, Ni, Mg
and/or S.

10 In the automotive industry, cast iron alloys are
used to produce castings which have to be highly
thermally stable, for example the parts which come into
contact with the hot exhaust gases from the internal
combustion engine. Since internal combustion engines
15 are producing ever higher powers, the exhaust-gas
temperatures are becoming ever higher. The exhaust
manifolds and casings of turbochargers are exposed to
temperatures of 900 to over 1000°C. The transformation
temperature, i.e. the temperature at which one type of
20 crystal in the alloy is transformed into another type
of crystal, plays an important role at these high
temperatures. At the transformation temperature, the
volume changes and this volume change leads to
irregular expansion characteristics on the part of the
25 castings. The alloys which can be used must have
transformation temperatures which are higher than the
maximum temperature of use. Austenitic cast steel
alloys or alloys with a high nickel content are also
used for the abovementioned high use temperatures.

30 Nickel is a relatively expensive raw material. The
exhaust manifolds are often also formed from sheet-
metal parts, in which case the poor sound insulation
makes its presence adversely felt. These solutions are
relatively complex to produce.

35 U.S. Patent 5,236,660 discloses a cast iron alloy
of the generic type. The alloy contains approximately
3.1% by weight of C, 4.6% by weight of Si, 1.9% by
weight of Al, 1% by weight of Mo and if appropriate
also admixtures of Co and Nb.

Working on the basis of this prior art, it is an object of the invention to provide a cast iron alloy which is made from elements which are as inexpensive as 5 possible, the castings having as high a use temperature as possible.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The foregoing object is achieved by providing a 10 cast iron alloy for cast iron products having a high thermal stability, wherein the alloy comprises containing, as nonferrous constituents, at least the elements C, Si, Mo, Al and, as admixtures, Ni, Mg and/or S, and the C content being less than 2.9% by 15 weight and preferably 2.5 to 2.8% by weight.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

In accordance with the present invention, the alloy should have the highest possible structure 20 stability and be as resistant as possible to oxidation. The foregoing is achieved by providing a Si content of between 4.7 to 5.2% by weight and an Al content of between 0.5 to 0.9% by weight. Molybdenum is added in an amount of between 0.5 to 0.9% by weight.

25 The invention provides a cast iron alloy which has a transformation temperature of more than 950°C, has no disruptive expansion properties when used in conjunction with internal combustion engines and which can be produced as inexpensively as possible in a 30 casting process. The graphite in the cast iron alloy may be spheroidal or vermicular. The amount of nickel added remains restricted to 0.1 to 1% by weight. Magnesium and silicon may be present in trace amounts of up to .05% by weight. It has proven particularly 35 advantageous to add zirconium in the range from 0.1 to 0.4% by weight immediately before it is cast into its final shape. Zirconium has a favorable influence on the

oxidation resistance and the mechanical strength. The zirconium may be added in the form of a prealloy.

Example 1

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An exhaust manifold for an internal combustion engine of a passenger car made from nodular cast iron with the following chemical composition in percent by weight: 2.6 C, 5.1 Si, 0.1 Ni, 0.6 Mo, 0.6 Al, 0.6 Zr, 0.04 Mg 10 and less than 0.01 S has a ferritic microstructure. Measurements carried out in a dilatometer result in a longitudinal linear expansion coefficient of $16.10^{-6}/K$, which makes it possible to conclude that the transformation temperature is over 950°C. In a hot 15 tensile test at a temperature of 300°C, the following mechanical strength values were determined: $R_{p0.2} = 575 \text{ N/mm}^2$, $R_m = 600 \text{ N/mm}^2$ and $A = 0.4\%$.
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Example 2

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An exhaust manifold for an internal combustion engine of a passenger car made from cast iron with vermicular graphite having the following chemical composition in percent by weight: 2.6 C, 5.1 Si, 1.0 Ni, 0.7 Mo, 25 0.6 Al, 0.3 Zr, 0.02 Mg and 0.02 S has a ferritic microstructure. Measurements carried out in a dilatometer result in a longitudinal linear expansion coefficient of $16.10^{-6}/K$, which makes it possible to conclude that the transformation temperature is over 30 950°C. In a hot tensile test at a temperature of 300°C, the following mechanical strength values were determined: $R_m = 545 \text{ N/mm}^2$ and $A = 0.1\%$.

If the temperature does not drop below 1460°C during 35 casting and if the elements Al and Zr are only added immediately prior to casting, for example as an Al-Zr prealloy, it is possible to produce ferritic cast iron products with a transformation temperature of over

950°C. The products produced in this way are distinguished by a very low change in volume as a function of the temperature, a good thermal shock resistance, good mechanical properties, a good 5 resistance to oxidation and a low raw material price.

This invention may be embodied in other forms or carried out in other ways without departing from the spirit or essential characteristics thereof. The present embodiment is therefore to be considered as in 10 all respects illustrative and not restrictive, the scope of the invention being indicated by the appended claims, and all changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency are intended to be embraced therein.

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